



Grants Available for Grazing Assistance and Education

Release Date: February 21, 2012

Contact: Ashley Huibregtse, 608-224-5002

Jim Dick, Communications Director, 608-224-5020

MADISON – At a time when more and more farmers are turning to grazing, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has announced the availability of competitive grants to support grazing technical assistance and education to farmers. According to the most recent Census of Agriculture, 22% of all dairy farmers and 42% of all beef farmers use management intensive grazing on their operations.

“The education and technical assistance provided by these grants will strengthen Wisconsin’s grazing industry by helping farmers to be more profitable,” said Mike Powers, Administrator of the Agricultural Development Division. “When using management intensive grazing effectively, farmers can feed high-quality forages to their livestock while reducing today’s high input costs.”

Grazing grants are provided through the Wisconsin Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative, which aims to expand the use of profitable, grazing-based livestock production systems that foster environmental stewardship. Eligible applicants for these grants include county, state and federal agriculture and natural resources agencies; colleges and universities; non-profit organizations; grazing networks; and farmers.

Education grants support the activities of networks, organizations and agencies to educate farmers and consumers about the economic, environmental and social benefits of grazing. Technical assistance grants provide funds for grazing specialists to work one-on-one with farmers to develop their grazing systems.

“Previous recipients of education project grants directly served an estimated 42,430 farmers by hosting 181 pasture walks and holding 174 meetings, conferences or workshops. Our technical service providers wrote and revised 427 grazing plans for individual farmers, managing 25,270 acres of high-quality acreage,” said Laura Paine, DATCP’s Organic and Grazing Specialist. “I encourage applicants to review the grazing grant materials to create strong proposals that will build on these successes.”

Applications for the technical assistance and education grazing grants must be postmarked by April 23, 2012. Projects will be selected through a competitive process dependent on final state and federal funding levels.

Grant application materials can be found at http://datcp.wi.gov/Farms/Grazing/Grazing_Grants. For more information, contact Paine at 608-224-5120 or laura.paine@wi.gov. You can also connect with DATCP on Twitter at twitter.com/widatcp or Facebook at facebook.com/widatcp.

###